

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DUBLIN 00387 181657Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AF-08 IO-13 DHA-02 /091 W
-----190154 097158 /70

R 181611Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8830
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L DUBLIN 387

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR EEC EI
SUBJECT: EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING

REF: (A) TUNIS 898, (B) EC BRUSSELS 1435

1. THE HEAD OF THE IRISH DELEGATION TO THE TUNIS
MEETING, STATE SECRETARY ROBERT MCDONAGH, HAS DESCRIBED
THE MEETING AS "REASONABLE" AND "MODERATE". HE SAID
THAT ALTHOUGH THERE WERE A FEW "DRAMATIC" MOMENTS,
IN GENERAL IT WAS APPARENT THAT THE ARABS HAD REIGNED
IN THEIR MOR RADICAL ELEMENTS AND DID NOT MAKE GREAT
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 DUBLIN 00387 181657Z

EFFORTS TO MOVE THE EUROPEANS INTO "MORE ADVANCED"
POLITICAL POSITIONS. HE THOUGHT THAT THE FINAL
COMMUNIQUE, THOUGH THE SUBJECT OF MUCH NEGOTIATION,
INCLUDING ONE ALL NIGHT SESSION, REPRESENTED MODERATION
AND COMPROMISE ON THE PART OF THE ARABS.

2. MCDONAGH TOLD EMBOFFS THAT THE PRINCIPAL "DRAMATIC"

MOMENT WAS THE OPENING SESSION, WHEN KHELIL MADE SOME STIFF ACCUSATIONS. IN REPLY FOR THE COMMUNITY FARBER FELT OBLIGED TO ADD A COUPLE OF SENTENCES AFTER GIVING HIS PREPARED TEXT (DESCRIBED IN REFTEL). THIS CAUSED QUITE A FLURRY AMONG THE ARABS AND RESULTED IN A SIX-HOUR ARAB CAUCUS TO DISCUSS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE TWO SENTENCES.

3. MCDONAGH NOTED THAT IN A NUMBER OF INSTANCES THE ARAB DRAFT COMMUNIQUE WAS MORE MODERATE THAN THE EUROPEAN DRAFT. EXAMPLE: THE ARABS DRAFT ADDED "SINCE 1967" TO THE FIRST SENTENCE OF PARAGRAPH NINE (REFTEL B). HE NOTED SOME DISSENSION IN THE ARAB RANKS, WITH THE IRAQIS BEING THE CHIEF TROUBLE-MAKERS. THE PLO REPRESENTATIVE ("WHO, OF COURSE, WE DID NOT RECOGNIZE AS SUCH"), DAJONI, TURNED OUT TO BE NOT ONLY A STRONG MAN AT THE CONFERENCE BUT A MOST MODERATE, REASONABLE AND FRIENDLY MAN. MCDONAGH SAID THAT AN ARAB FRIEND TOLD HIM THAT DAJONI WAS FROM THE PLO "THINK TANK, WHATEVER THAT IS".

4. ON THE ECONOMIC SIDE MCDONAGH'S ASSISTANT PADRAIG MURPHY, WHO ALSO ATTENDED THE CONFERENCE, WAS SKEPTICAL ABOUT ANY REAL PROGRESS. THE MAIN POINT WAS THE FIFTEEN MILLION DOLLARS PLEDGED BY THE SAUDIS FOR RESEARCH ON PROJECTS. THE EC HAS MORE OR LESS DECIDED ON A COUNTER-PART CONTRIBUTION OF ABOUT 1TEN MILLION DOLLARS, BUT THIS EFFORT WILL MOVE SLOWLY. MURPHY DID NOT EXPECT THE JUBA RIVER PROJECT TO GET OFF THE GROUND BEFORE THE NEXT GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING, TENTATIVELY SCHEDULED FOR BRUSSELS IN STPTEMBER.

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 03 DUBLIN 00387 181657Z

5. WE HAD A GENERAL DISCUSSION OF THE FUTURE OF THE DIALOGUE. MCDONAGH NOTED THAT THERE ARE DIFFERENCES OF OPINION IN THE EC ABOUT THE WHOLE AFFAIR, WITH THE IRISH BEING IN THE "MORE FLEXIBLE" CAMP. HE SAID, HOWEVER, WITHOUT NAMING COUNTRIES, THAT THERE WAS SUFFICIENT "CONSERVATIVE" SENTIMENT TO PREVENT THE EC FROM DOING ANYTHING RASH, AND THE US AND ISRAELIS NEED NOT WORRY. "THE DIALOGUE SHOULD NOT COMPLICATE ANY US INITIATIVES," HE ADDED, 1977 WILL BE A "SLOW" YEAR, ESPECIALLY AS THE ALGERIANS, IN THE PRESIDENCY, ARE LUKEWARM. MCDONAGH SAID THERE WOULD BE A GOOD POSSIBILITY OF A DIALOGUE MINISTERIAL MEETING IN 1978 IF THE SAUDIS, THEN IN THE PRESIDENCY, PUSH THE ISSUE ("WHO CAN SAY NO TO SAUDI ARABIA?"). CURLEY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, PERSONAL OPINION, FOREIGN TRADE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 18-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977DUBLIN00387
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770059-0492
Format: TEL
From: DUBLIN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770228/aaaaaytf.tel
Line Count: 111
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 1da67cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 TUNIS 898, 77 EC BRUSSELS 1435
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 23-Nov-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3284531
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EURO-ARAB DIALOGUE GENERAL COMMITTEE MEETING
TAGS: PFOR, EI, XF, TS, XG, EEC, (MCDONAGH, ROBERT)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/1da67cc4-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009